



# Guilt Verses Feelings in Salvation

By David J. Stewart | February 2007 | [Click for background music in new window](#)

**"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." —Romans 3:19**

There is MUCH misunderstanding today in the religious world concerning Biblical salvation. One of the major problems is that people fail to realize that salvation is of God alone, and not men. King David exclaimed in Psalm 89:26... **"Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation."** Jesus is the ROCK of our salvation. This is plainly taught in the New Testament... **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"** (1st Corinthians 3:11). Far too many preachers today are ADDING steps to salvation--requiring people to walk isles, or praying a prayer, or feeling sorry for their sins. You can't show me any of that in the Bible.

I would like to discuss this matter of feeling sorry for one's sins, because I've heard some preachers teaching it today. Now, let me say forthright that I do not believe every preacher who disagrees with me is a false prophet. Not at all. I DO think that many of today's preachers, some of them well known, are a bit hap-hazardous in their wording of their Gospel tracts and Gospel presentations. Be that as it may, you CANNOT show me anything in God's Word that requires a sinner to FEEL SORRY about their sins to be saved. The great difficulty in requiring such feelings is that it makes salvation RELATIVE, i.e., how sorry does a person have to feel to be saved? What if a person is sorry for their sins, but not enough to be willing to forsake their sins? Does this mean that God will not save them? You see, this is a critical matter. Truthfully, we do not have to give up anything to be saved. Salvation is a FREE gift of God, paid for with Jesus' blood (Romans 5:15; 1st John 1:7). If we believe upon Christ, in spite of any doubts, He promises to save us, **"...him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."**

Thankfully, salvation is not that complicated. Men complicate things. Salvation is simple, and the Word of God WARNS us in 2nd Corinthians 11:3 about those who complicate the Gospel message. There is much confusion today in our churches concerning salvation because of various *Trojan Horse* doctrines which have corrupted the simplicity of salvation. One such damnable heresy is *Lordship Salvation*, which is rooted in self-righteousness, i.e., a person is required to forsake their sins to be saved. Pentecostal Charismatics follow a similar damnable heresy

called *Perseverance of the Saints*, which is also firmly rooted in self-righteousness, i.e., you can lose your salvation if you quit the Christian life. BOTH of these demonic heresies are rooted in self-righteousness, and fail to rest solely upon the finished redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Christ's work of redemption was finished at the Mercy Seat in Heaven, not upon the cross as so many naively teach... **"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"** (Hebrews 9:24). All of the prophecies concerning Christ had been fulfilled at the time Jesus said... "It is finished." This is clearly evidenced in John 19:28.

## **Guilt Necessary, Not Sorrow**

So if a lost sinner doesn't need to FEEL sorry for their sins, then what does need to happen for them to be saved? Romans 3:19 gives us the answer... **"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."** The word "guilty" in the Greek is "hupodikos" and means "*under judgment, one who lost his suit; of liable to punishment from God*" (SOURCE: *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*). Hence, a person must realize their GUILT to be saved, i.e., that the condemnation of God is upon them because of their own sins. This is vastly different from a FEELING of sorrow or remorse over one's sins. Do you see the big difference? To FEEL sorry for one's sins is an act of self-EMOTION; whereas, GUILT is a matter of self-AWARENESS. The two are often NOT connected. Many convicts are sorry (emotionally) for their crimes, but only because they got caught. They have no genuine awareness of the sins they've committed. Likewise, a person may walk down to a church altar and cry with emotion over their failures in life; YET, have NO awareness that they are under God's condemnation and awaiting judgment. So you see, a feeling of emotion, i.e., sorrow over one's sins is not Biblical repentance. Biblical repentance is when a lost sinner becomes AWARE that they are under the condemnation of GOD'S LAW for their own sins, and they **TURN** in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting upon His shed blood to forgive and take away those sins... **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ..."** The reason why salvation is found alone in Christ, and why we are to believe ONLY upon Him, is because Jesus paid the price for our sins with His precious blood. Muhammad never did this. Confucius never did this. Buddha never did this. In fact, if you'll look in those graves, you'll find the bodily remains of each of those men; but Jesus' tomb is EMPTY, because He is alive forevermore. What a Savior!!!

The Word of God does not require anyone to feel sorry for their sins to be saved; rather, we only need to become aware that we are "*liable to punishment from God*." Many people today readily admit that they are imperfect and sinful, but few believe that they are under God's condemnation, and bound for the Lake of Fire. They have NOT "*become guilty before God*" as Romans 3:19 states. Thus, they cannot be saved until they become aware of their sinful condition. How can a person be saved who does not believe they need saving? If a lost sinner doesn't

realize their guilt and the condemnation to Hell facing them, then why would they want or need a Savior? Thus, many people today have churchianity without Christianity, and religion without salvation. They are superficially following the "teachings of Jesus," but they don't know Jesus as a personal Savior. There is little GUILT in our churches today. Few religious people today are aware that they are under the condemnation of GOD'S LAW and deserving of Hell-fire. They go to church as a mere social event, and find self-gratification in giving charity; but they are going about to establish their own righteousness, instead of submitting to the righteousness of God, which is Christ Jesus! (Romans 10:2-4).

## What is "godly sorrow"?

I know some people will naturally bring up 2nd Corinthians 7:10... **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."** Carefully note that Paul was speaking to the church. In the Apostle Paul's first letter to the believers at Corinth, he scolded them and called them CARNAL(1st Corinthians 3:1). They FELT bad and repented of their sinful ways. So Paul writes back in 2nd Corinthians to commend and encourage them in the Lord. Paul WASN'T talking about the salvation of the soul in 2nd Corinthians 7:10; but of the salvaging of the believer's life. Biblical evidence of this is found in Philippians 2:12... **"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."** Notice that Paul says to "work out YOUR OWN salvation"; NOT God's salvation! We cannot work out God's salvation, that is His department alone. All we must do is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved (Acts 16:31). We can do NOTHING to save ourselves from Hell, or even to help. We must trust Jesus alone.

However, we are responsible for the lives we live while here on earth as believers. It is our responsibility to yield to God's Holy Spirit daily, and to allow God to work in our life through His Word. This is the secret to living a successful Christian life. To do this we absolutely must saturate our minds with the Word of God. When Paul says to *work out YOUR OWN salvation*, he is simply saying that we each need to seek God's will as individuals. God has a plan and a purpose for every believer. We need to realize that we ALL "...must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2nd Corinthians 5:10). This Scripture speaks only of the believer. Unbelievers will NOT appear at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*; but rather, at *The Great White Throne of Judgment* to be sentenced to the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:11-15). As believers, we have the Holy Spirit in our body who convicts us about the sins in our life, often making us feel bad for our own benefit (just as a loving parent would do). The Holy Spirit may convict us through a Scripture we read, or through a thought He puts into our heart, or through a sermon we hear. As the Holy Spirit convicts, our heart should be tender and submissive towards God, with thankfulness and gratitude. This is the "godly sorrow" that each believer experiences, that should cause us each to draw nearer to God in daily repentance from sins in our life. Every believer who genuinely loves the Lord should

also have a sincere desire to please the Lord (John 14:15). Our Christian journey should daily bring us to our knees, in godly sorrow, over the sins and weaknesses in our life. Please note that this has NOTHING to do with the salvation of the soul--that is God's department completely. Do you see the difference? In 2nd Corinthians 7:10, Paul was simply speaking about the loving conviction of the Holy Spirit which is present in every believer's life.

## Conclusion

Let us be extremely careful how we word our Gospel tracts, our sermons, our articles, and our books nowadays--because lost sinners may misinterpret our words to mean a false doctrine. It used to be you could use the words "Lord and Saviour" from the Bible without hesitation. Unfortunately, Lordship Salvationists have perverted the meaning of the word "Lord" to mean forsaking one's sins to be saved. Folks, that's unbiblical. Consequently, I hesitate to use the word "Lord" without explaining the dangers of *Lordship Salvation* to people. [John MacArthur teaches damnable Lordship Salvation](#). In fact, [John MacArthur's own words condemn himself](#) concerning the blood of Jesus as well. Yet, Moody's *Founders Week* (an annual event in Chicago) honors John MacArthur as a guest speaker. Why? Heretics should be exposed, not honored.

The notion that a person needs to be sorry for their sins is not found in the Word of God. Yes, they do need to be aware of their condemnation under God's Law, and their justly deserved punishment of Hell-fire; but they may or may not feel any sorrow. Just as Romans 3:19 states, they must become GUILTY BEFORE GOD. This is all God requires of a lost sinner to be saved. Emotions are irrelevant to salvation.

---

## **Bible Study**

### **Ye Must Be Born Again!**